

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Previously amended) A ceramic-molding binder, comprising a vinyl alcohol polymer having an ethylene unit content of 2 to 19 mole %, a polymerization degree of 200 to 2,000, a degree of saponification of 80 to 99.99 mole %, a total content of carboxyl group and lactone rings of 0.02 to 0.4 mole %, wherein the carboxylic acid and lactone ring content in the vinyl alcohol polymer satisfies the following Formula I:

$$-1.94 \times 10^{-5} \times P + 0.044 \leq \text{content} \leq -1.39 \times 10^{-4} \times P + 0.42 \quad (\text{I})$$

(where the content (in mole %) represents the content of carboxylic acid and lactone rings, and P represents the viscosity average degree of polymerization of the vinyl alcohol polymer).

Claim 2 (Canceled)

Claim 3 (Previously amended) A ceramic-molding composition, comprising 0.1 to 20 weight parts of the ceramic-molding binder according to Claim 1, per 100 weight parts of ceramic powder.

Claim 4 (Original) A ceramic-molding composition according to Claim 3, wherein the ceramic powder comprises a ferrite powder.

Claim 5 (Previously amended) A method for producing a ceramic molding, comprising drying an aqueous kneaded material obtained from the ceramic-molding composition according to Claim 3 to form granules, and molding the granules followed by sintering.

Claim 6 (Previously amended) A compression-molding binder for ceramics, comprising a vinyl alcohol polymer having an ethylene unit content of 2 to 19 mole %, a polymerization degree of 200 to 2,000, a degree of saponification of 80 to 99.99 mole %, a total content of carboxyl group and lactone rings of 0.02 to 0.4 mole %, wherein the

carboxylic acid and lactone ring content in the vinyl alcohol polymer satisfies the following

Formula I:

$$-1.94 \times 10^{-5} \times P + 0.044 \leq \text{content} \leq -1.39 \times 10^{-4} \times P + 0.42 \text{ (I)}$$

(where the content (in mole %) represents the content of carboxylic acid and lactone rings, and P represents the viscosity average degree of polymerization of the vinyl alcohol polymer).

Claim 7 (Canceled)

Claim 8 (Previously amended) A ceramic-compression-molding composition, comprising 0.1 to 20 weight parts of the ceramic-molding binder according to Claim 6 per 100 weight parts of ceramic powder.

Claim 9 (Original) A ceramic-molding composition according to Claim 8, wherein the ceramic powder comprises a ferrite powder.

Claim 10 (Previously amended) A method for producing a ceramic molding, comprising drying an aqueous kneaded material obtained from the ceramic-molding composition according to Claim 8 to form granules, and molding the granules followed by sintering.

Claims 11-12 (Canceled)

Claim 13 (Previously added) A method for producing a ceramic molding, comprising drying an aqueous kneaded material obtained from the ceramic-molding composition according to Claim 4 to form granules, and molding the granules followed by sintering.

Claims 14-17 (Canceled)

Claim 18 (Previously added) A method for producing a ceramic molding, comprising drying an aqueous kneaded material obtained from the ceramic-molding composition according to Claim 9 to form granules, and molding the granules followed by sintering.

Claims 19-20 (Canceled)

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claims 11-12, 14-17 and 19-20 have been canceled.

No new matter has been added by the above amendment. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 13 and 18 are now pending in the application.